

Message Text

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17/53

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SY-05

SCCT-01 /069 W

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P 131430Z MAY 75 ZFG
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8081
INFO AMCONGEN MUNICH PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCCHARZVT
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
US MISSION GENEVA 276
US MISSION BERLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 1114

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR PARA 4

GENEVA FOR AMBASSADOR SHERER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS/ PFOR, PINT, CZ

SUBJECT: REPORTS OF ARRESTS

REF: MUNICH 878 NOTAL

1. RUDE PRAVO MAY 13 HAS ATTACK ON AUSTRIAN PRESS AND
RADIO, SPRINGER PRESS IN FRG AND LE MONDE IN FRANCE FOR
PUBLISHING REPORTS THAT ARRESTS TOOK PLACE IN CZECHO-
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SLOVAKIA DURING PERIOD OF CELEBRATING 30TH ANNIVERSARY

OF LIBERATION. PAPER SAYS THESE ACCOUNTS ARE "PURE FABRICATIONS."

2. AS MUNICH REPORTED REFTTEL, STORIES ARE APPARENTLY WIDESPREAD IN WEST NOW ABOUT ARRESTS, GIVING NAMES OF MLYNAR, HOREK, LITERA, KREN AND OTHERS. WE ARE HEARING THE SAME STORIES HERE, ALTHOUGH THEY DO NOT SEEM TO BE ALL OVER TOWN. ON MAY 12 WE HEARD FROM A CZECH SOURCE THAT LITERA, KREN AND MLYNAR WERE ARRESTED OVER THE HOLIDAY WEEKEND. (HE COULD HAVE HEARD IT FROM SOMEONE WHO GOT IT FROM WESTERN RADIO, OF COURSE.)

3. FRANKLY, MOST OF THE SOURCES WE ARE GETTING THESE STORIES FROM ARE NOT ABOVE SUSPICION--FEW SOURCES ARE IN CHZECOSLOVAKIA--AND WE FEEL OBLIGATED TO EXAMINE ALL STORIES CAREFULLY AT A TIME WHEN RUMORS ARE ABOUNDING. SO MANY SOURCES HAVE POSSIBLE POLICE CONNECTIONS THAT WE CANNOT DISCOUNT PLANTING OF DISINFORMATION (E.G. TO ALLOW RUDE PRAVO TO ISSUE BLAST SUCH AS THAT CITED IN PARA 1). EMIGRES ALSO HAVE THEIR OWN REASONS FOR FURTHERING SUCH STORIES.

4. NEVERTHELESS WHAT CAN BE SAID IS THAT MUCH FEAR IS PRESENT, ESPECIALLY AMONG THE VULNERABLE INTELLECTUALS AND THOSE WITH STRONG LINKS ABROAD OR TO 1968 LEADING FIGURES. IF THERE ARE NO ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES AND NO ARRESTS AND TRIALS, THERE WILL BE A LOT OF SURPRISED AND HAPPY PEOPLE IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

5. EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE TO REPORT RUMORS AS WE HEAR THEM, BUT WITH DUE CAUTION. WE URGE RFE TO USE EXTREME CAUTION IN TREATING THIS SUBJECT ON THE AIR. THE REGIME MAY BE BUILDING ITS CASE AGAINST DUBCEK AND SOME OF HIS SUPPORTERS, AND IT WOULD NOT HELP THEM OR THE GENERAL SITUATION AT THIS STAGE IF ANY US RADIO STATIONS BROADCAST LESS THAN SOLID INFORMATION. THE EMBASSY WILL OF COURSE BE HAPPY TO COMMENT PROMPTLY ON ANY REPORTS RFE WISHES TO CHECK OUT.
PERRY

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